



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Health Resources and Services Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection: Public Comment Request

#### Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program Performance, OMB No. 0915- 0363 –

#### Revision

**AGENCY:** Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the requirement for opportunity for public comment on proposed data collection projects of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, HRSA announces plans to submit an Information Collection Request (ICR), described below, to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Prior to submitting the ICR to OMB, HRSA seeks comments from the public regarding the burden estimate, below, or any other aspect of the ICR.

**DATES:** Comments on this ICR should be received no later than **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]**.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your comments to [paperwork@hrsa.gov](mailto:paperwork@hrsa.gov) or by mail to the HRSA Information Collection Clearance Officer, Room 14N136B, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To request a copy of the clearance requests submitted to OMB for review, email Samantha Miller, the acting HRSA Information Collection Clearance Officer at [paperwork@hrsa.gov](mailto:paperwork@hrsa.gov) or call (301) 443-9094.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** When submitting comments or requesting information, please include the information collection request title for reference.

*Information Collection Request Title:* Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program

Performance OMB No. 0915- 0363 – Revision

*Abstract:* This information collection comment request is for continued approval of the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program Performance Measures. HRSA is proposing to continue this data collection with minor changes to the organization of the data. The current performance measures are collected electronically in the Performance Improvement and Measurement System which awardees access securely through the HRSA Electronic Handbooks.

The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex Program) is authorized by Section 1820 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i-4), as amended. The purpose of the Flex Program is to enable state designated entities to support critical access hospitals in quality improvement, quality reporting, performance improvement, and benchmarking; to assist facilities seeking designation as critical access hospitals; and to create a program to establish or expand the provision of rural emergency medical services.

A 60-day notice published in the **Federal Register**, Vol. 87, No. 46, FR 13300-13301 (March 9, 2022). There were no public comments.

*Need and Proposed Use of the Information:* For this program, performance measures were developed to provide data useful to the Flex program and to enable HRSA to provide aggregate program data required by Congress under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010. These measures cover principal topic areas of interest to the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, including: (a) quality reporting, (b) quality improvement interventions, (c) financial and operational improvement initiatives, (d) population health management, (e) rural emergency medical services integration and (f) innovative care models. In addition to informing the Office's progress toward meeting the goals set in Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, the information is important in identifying and understanding programmatic improvement across program areas, as well as guiding future iterations of the Flex Program and prioritizing areas of need and support.

This submission includes the addition of minor revisions in the organization of the measures to align with the changes to the organization of the program areas within the Flex

Program. The revisions include changes to align with current language and a broadening of scope for some activities. The measures will remain unchanged. For example, population health improvement activities were previously combined with rural emergency medical services integration, and these measures will be separated into two distinct program areas. The burden remains unchanged with these changes.

*Likely Respondents:* Respondents are the Flex Program coordinators for the states participating in the Flex Program. There are currently 45 states participating in the Flex Program.

*Burden Statement:* Burden in this context means the time expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, disclose or provide the information requested. This includes the time needed to review instructions; to develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purpose of collecting, validating and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; to train personnel and to be able to respond to a collection of information; to search data sources; to complete and review the collection of information; and to transmit or otherwise disclose the information. The total annual burden hours estimated for this ICR are summarized in the table below.

#### Total Estimated Annualized Burden - Hours

Form Name	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Burden Hours
Performance Improvement Measurement System (within the Electronic Handbooks system)	45	1	45	70	3,150
	<b>45</b>		<b>45</b>		<b>3,150</b>

HRSA specifically requests comments on (1) the necessity and utility of the proposed

information collection for the proper performance of the agency's functions, (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden, (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected, and (4) the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden.

**Maria G. Button,**

*Director,*

*Executive Secretariat.*

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